

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



October 15, 1992

ALL-COUNTY LETTER NO. 92-90

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY CIVIL RIGHTS COORDINATORS

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- ☐ State Law Change
- ☐ Federal Law or Regulation Change
- ☒ Court Order or Settlement Agreement
- ☐ Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- ☐ Initiated by SDSS

SUBJECT: PROVISION OF SERVICE TO NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING
APPLICANTS/RECIPIENTS

REFERENCE: Manual of Policies & Procedures (MPP) Section 21-115

The purpose of this letter is to clarify and remind Counties of the requirement that they provide effective bilingual services to non-English speaking applicants/recipients. This may include individuals who speak no English or limited English. The overall purpose of MPP Section 21-115 is to ensure that applicants/recipients who cannot effectively communicate in English are provided the same level of service as the client population at large. In order to accomplish this, Counties are required to provide service either through the use of qualified bilingual employees, paid interpreters or volunteers who can speak the non-English language of the person being served.

Recognizing that the need for bilingual service varies by County, this regulation section specifies that where the population of non-English speaking clients reaches five percent or more in any given program or location, the County must meet the need by hiring qualified bilingual employees. A "qualified bilingual employee" is defined as "... an employee who, in addition to possessing the necessary qualification for the particular classification, is certified through an SDSS approved or administered process to be proficient in and will use oral and/or written communication in the non-English language of the person to be served."

When the percentage of non-English speaking clients is less than five percent, a County may meet the bilingual needs of the client population by hiring bilingual staff, using paid interpreters or by using volunteers.

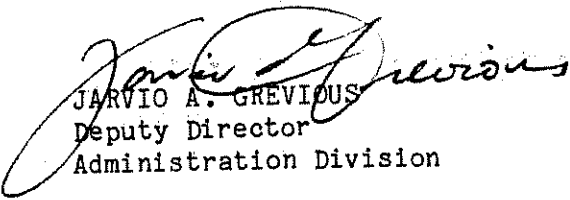
In those instances when applicants/recipients bring their own interpreters, we wish to remind Counties of the requirement of MPP Section 21-115.16 which states the following:

Applicants/recipients may provide their own interpreter; however, the agency shall not require them to do so. Only under extenuating circumstances, or at the specific request of the applicant/recipient, shall an agency allow a minor (under the age of 18 years) to act as an interpreter.

In situations where Counties experience difficulties in finding qualified interpreters they may contact the State Department of Social Services, Language Services Bureau (SDSS/LSB) at (916-654-1282) for help in locating a bilingual person within their County.

A secondary component in providing bilingual service is the provision of translated forms. Pursuant to MPP Section 21-115.2 "Forms and other written material required for the provision of aid or services shall be available and offered to the applicant/recipient in the individual's primary language when such forms and other written material are provided by SDSS..." A list of those forms that have been translated into languages other than English, is sent to Counties by the SDSS/LSB on a regular basis. Counties are required to stock all forms that have been translated by SDSS even if there have been no requests. Most Counties establish a file folder with one plastic coated copy that can be photocopied when the need arises.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact your Civil Rights Analyst at (916)654-2107.


JARVIO A. GREVIOUS
Deputy Director
Administration Division

cc: CWDA